# City of Allentown

Allentown, PA

Mayor Matt Tuerk

## Pledge Summary

TBD

## Action Items Committed for 2025

### Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

### Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

### Systems Change

- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

## Past Pledge Archive

| Mayor Name | Program Year | Pledge Date | Achievement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mayor Matt Tuerk | 2025 | 3/27/2025 | Leadership Circle |

## Action Items

**In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).**

90

**Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)**

49

**In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.**

2

**Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.**

community gardens, parks. There were pollinators planted throughout our city park system by City staff. Additionally, the City subgranted a Youth Climate Action Grant to two organizations that planted pollinator gardens. These were located at Trexler Middle School as part of their outdoor classroom project and West Park Civic Association who created a pollinator garden in West Park. We also provided support and partnerships to the Da Vinci Center who created a new pollinator garden in the City at their museum terrace and Lehigh Conservation District that expanded their pollinator gardens, invasive species removals, native plantings within Resilience Park.

**How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?**

The Learn, Plant, Play event that was held on September 13th was held within a low-income community and community of color. We partnered with Promise Neighborhoods of

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the Lehigh Valley to hold this event and they specifically serve this demographic. 90% of the attendees identified as a person of color.

**What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?**

Restoring and maintaining pollinator and monarch habitat directly supports our environmental and community goals. Monarchs play an important role in healthy ecosystems, local food production, and resilient green spaces. We are committed to taking practical actions to be the example and inspire our community to do the same.

**What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?**

Examples of events, programs and materials, especially to engage with kids and materials in spanish and arabic would be great!

**What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?**

Thank you for this program and we're excited to continue these efforts into 2026!

## Selected Action Items

### Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

**Date of Proclamation:**

**Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):**

### Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

**What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.**

**Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.**

### Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community

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## location.

**Where is the demonstration garden located and how does this location relate to the cultural significance of the monarch (if relevant)? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible)**

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?**

**What is the size of the demonstration garden (in acres)? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres ). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.**

## Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

**What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)**

**How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)**

**Please list the names of the schools you are working with.**

**What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?**

**How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).**

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?**

**How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.**

**What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?**

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## Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?**

**What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.**

**If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.**

**If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.**

## Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

**Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.**

Butterfly Milkweed Seed Spotlight.pdf

**Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.**

Worked with Lehigh Conservation District to develop this Milkweed info sheet to give out at a Community Garden Event (Learn, Plant, Play on September 13th, 2025). Community garden is led by Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley to serve the nearby neighborhood. Info sheets were also left in the discovery bench/seed swap location after the event for community garden users, as well as some harvested native milkweed from the pollinator garden nearby, maintained by Lehigh County Conservation District.

## Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

**Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.**

DRAFT_Invasive_Reccommednations.pdf

**How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.**

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Allentown Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), Allentown Parks Maintenance Department, Allentown Sustainability Department

**Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and revisions/maintenance implemented for mowing or planting programs.**

Allentown EAC worked with an intern from Muhlenberg College in the summer to identify opportunities to decrease the use of pesticides/herbicides, reduce the amount of invasive species in the park, and increase the amount of native plants and pollinators, including milkweed. Then, a meeting was scheduled between all three parties to discuss alternative practices such as reducing the use of pesticides/herbicides and utilizing more manual methods of removing invasives.

## Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

**How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)**

30

**What species were collected or propagated?**

Orange Butterfly Milkweed

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?**

Lehigh County Conservation District, Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley

**Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.**

We hosted a multi-faceted event called "Learn, Plant, Play" focused on teaching adults and children about Monarchs and other pollinators, milkweed and other pollinator friendly plants, host a seed swap, learn how to collect milkweed seeds, work in the community garden, harvest food, harvest seeds from the food in the garden, and plant new vegetables, including garlic to come up in the spring. This event attracted many families from the nearby community garden and served as a first experience for gardening and exposure to the benefits of pollinators. The event was incredibly successful and we hope to expand next year.

## Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

**How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)**

2

**Please describe the educational information on the sign(s), and provide any links to externally purchased sign(s).**

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Signs in both Resilience Park and West Park specifically highlight the pollinator garden locations and benefits to people and the environment.

## Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

**Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.**

R192 - Parks and EAC Herbicide Reduction.pdf

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?**

Allentown Environmental Advisory Council

**What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.**

Complete

**If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.**

On December 3rd, the city adopted a resolution stating a joint commitment of the City of Allentown's Department of Parks and Recreation and Allentown Environmental Advisory Council to maintain limited use of herbicides in public parks, and to continue to pursue sustainable land management alternatives in order to protect the wellbeing of Allentown's local ecosystem.

**If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.**

The resolution attached has not yet been signed as it was just approved. Can produce a signed copy later if need be.

## Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

**Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.**

LearnPlantPlay_Flyer_25.pdf

**How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)**

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75 pollinator seed packets, 50 seed harvesting packets to harvest milkweed

**How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)**

30

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?**

Lehigh County Conservation District, Promise Neighborhoods of the Lehigh Valley

## Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?**

Lehigh Conservation District, West Park Civic Association

**How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)**

15

**Please describe your effort in completing this action.**

In 2024, the City partnered with the Lehigh Conservation District to allow for an outdoor classroom, native plantings, invasive species removal, and pollinator garden (which includes Orange Butterfly Milkweed). This partnership continues through 2025 and included 4 events at the garden this year. These events served 37 youth and 24 adults. Aside from this partnership, the Parks Maintenance staff has been trained specifically to identify milkweed within city parks and how to maintain and ensure it thrives in the parks. Milkweed has been planted in our most prominent parks, such as Lehigh Parkway, Trexler Park, and Trout Creek Park, among many others. The City also supported the expansion of a pollinator garden in West Park, which was awarded $7,000 to expand the park through its Youth Climate Action Fund and Love Your Block Grants.

## Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

**What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?**

N/A

**What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.**

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In Progress

**If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.**

The city is working to develop its first Climate Action Plan, that will include specific actions related to monarch conservation strategies. The draft Parks comprehensive plan, published this year specifically identifies opportunities for pollinator gardens (that can include monarch habitat) in the master plan for Roosevelt Park.

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